

# COMMON GROUND



SUMMER 1957

VOLUME XI NUMBER 2

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# The Council of Christians and Jews

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

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## Cover Photograph

Yacht Racing off the Isle of Wight  
(Photo: The Times)

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*Signed articles express the views of the contributors which are not necessarily those of the Council of Christians and Jews.*

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## Si vis pacem . . .

**O**F COURSE we want peace! Who doesn't? The more so today because the consequences of war, nuclear war, are likely to be so catastrophic that the mind recoils in horror from the mere contemplation of them. But how is real peace to be achieved? Certainly we can hardly be said to be enjoying peace at the present time when the peoples and nations of the world are already at war, a cold ideological, economic and racial kind of war.

To this question the classic answer is still for many the contemporary answer. *Si vis pacem, para bellum*. The guarantee of peace is to be prepared for war. There is, however, a certain change of emphasis. Our preparations, it is now suggested, should be designed, not so much to defend ourselves from possible attack, but rather to deter any possible enemy from launching it. Deterrents, not defence, appears to be "the word" for this day and generation. We must manufacture and test nuclear fission weapons, we are told, in order that we may never have to use them!

It is, of course, perfectly possible to produce reasoned arguments in support of this thesis; arguments that in fact have a certain empirical sanction: for it is difficult to imagine that at any other time in history such provocations to national pride as we have recently witnessed in one part of the world or another could have had any other outcome than a general outbreak of war.

It becomes increasingly clear, therefore, that the *real* question of the age is not so much whether we want peace as whether in fact peace is possible. It was presumably recognition of this which led

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those responsible for drawing up the Atlantic Charter in 1940 to affirm that "all nations of the world, for *realistic* as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force." It is, unfortunately, the absence of this note of "realism" from so much of the contemporary discussion of the "spiritual" and "moral" aspects of the problem that has made arguments in favour of disarmament and the abandonment of force seem to so many people both platitudinous and impracticable.

The appearance at this juncture of a "Penguin Special" by Dame Kathleen Lonsdale concerned with precisely these issues is therefore an event of quite outstanding importance. That its author is a member of the Society of Friends and is, as a matter of principle, a convinced pacifist, is well known. But she happens also to be a leading physicist, and it is as a scientist rather than as pacifist that she discusses the possibility of achieving and maintaining international peace. Her concern is not merely with the harnessing of nuclear energy, but also with problems of over-population, inequalities of population density and living standards, the increase of power which accompanies the technical development of the Afro-Asian peoples, and the maintenance of international law.

But, while people in all walks of life and, it is to be hoped, in many parts of the world are wrestling with the compelling facts so clearly set out in this book, the importance of the task to which we in this Council are committed becomes increasingly clear. It is a task which Professor Lonsdale has redefined for us in the concluding paragraph of her book. There she states that she knows no way of avoiding the tremendous dangers which confront mankind at the moment "except by renewed vigilance, and an emphasis on the necessity, when the training of young people is involved, for making it clear that a life of non-violence is essentially one of deep spiritual out-reach to the good in other men and of belief, that even if there is no response, even if we appear to fail, goodness will in the end prevail."

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I shall fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

This conviction, so manifestly a part of the common ground between Judaism and Christianity, it is our task to translate into the practical programme of education for that positive and creative form of tolerance which is for ever reaching out to the good in others.

## Personal Prayer in Judaism

CHAIM PEARL

*A recent series of addresses to the London Society of Jews and Christians were on the theme "Jewish and Christian Views on Religious Observance." We are glad to be able to print summaries of some of these addresses in "Common Ground," as we believe they will help towards mutual understanding. The first is by the Rev. Dr. Chaim Pearl, M.A., Chief Minister of the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation.*

NOT PERSONAL prayer, but the synagogue and congregational worship are supreme in Judaism, because of the important place which the community holds in the Jewish outlook. That outlook is reflected in the very words that are used in our prayers. In Jewish practice, the individual rarely prays in his own name or on his own behalf. He prays to God as a member of the community. It is always "we" and "us," always the collective body of the congregation or the whole people of Israel which is central in the worshipper's mind. In the rabbinic instructions regarding prayer, and according to the codes of law which define every single point that has anything to do with prayer, the rabbis always advised the individual to make every effort to worship in the Synagogue rather than privately at home. "Where there are ten people (the quorum for a congregation) the *Shechinah* (the Divine presence) rests easily," it is said. "If it is not possible to pray in the Synagogue, then pray at work; if that is impossible, then pray at home; and if that is not possible, then pray in your heart."

### Prayer in the heart

Nevertheless, in spite of this insistence on the primary place of congregational worship, there is a very real place for private and personal prayer. All the instances of prayer which we read about in the Bible are instances of private prayer; the prayers of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah and other biblical figures are all examples of individual men and women who, in their own way, attempted to make contact with the Supreme Power. It is true that the Jew prays as part of the peoplehood of Israel; yet prayer takes place in the heart of the individual.

Judaism has left a great deal of room in its ritual for family worship at home. The place of the home in Jewish life and Jewish religious practice is of supreme importance. The sanctification of

the Sabbath and the festivals, the blessings covering every domestic act, all those ceremonies which go to make up Jewish life are enacted by the individual in his home without any relation to the wider community of Jews outside.

### **Need for preparation**

In public worship, the individual plays a full part as a distinct unit of the congregation. In connection with the art of prayer, stress is laid on the necessity for self-preparation. All the mystics in Jewish history emphasise the need for a period of preparation and meditation before an act of public worship. For some Jewish teachers, this preparatory meditation would last at least an hour. The Jewish prayer book, which contains the entire ritual of the Synagogue, is really an anthology of religious writings culled from a variety of sources. Within its pages are a number of passages for meditation and study taken from the Talmud and other sections of rabbinic literature. These have nothing to do with prayer or praise but are clearly intended as preparation for worship.

In an act of public worship the personal concentration of the individual worshipper is the most important single factor. "Serve Him with all your heart" is the biblical text of which Maimonides said "That is prayer." It is possible for an individual, while praying as a member of a large congregation, to lose himself in his intense personal concentration, so that he feels that he only is present speaking to God. The Rabbis said a great deal about the importance of *kavvanah*, meaning "direction," complete concentration on God.

### **Prayers for special occasions**

Judaism has always had a large number of prayers for special events in the individual's own life: the blessing for the new-born babe, at circumcision, on the naming of a girl child, prayer for recovery and after recovery from illness, at marriage and death. The individual's name is also inserted in appropriate prayers recited in the Synagogue. Certain people are enjoined to give thanksgiving to God on specific occasions—those who have crossed the sea, those who have crossed the desert and those who have been released from prison. These instances are of historic interest, but many more have been added through the centuries.

Does God answer prayer? In the Service for the New Moon, we pray: "Our God and God of our fathers, renew this month unto



#### BINDING THE TEPHILLIN

*A picture from "The Jewish Way," in the filmstrip series "One God—the Ways He is Worshipped and Served."*

us for good." The decision as to whether the outcome is good or not is not ours. We are standing too close to the picture. Only God, to whom the past, the present and the future are as one, who sees events in the perspective of eternity, can know what is good. When it seems as if God has not answered a particular prayer, that is

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itself the answer. That idea finds a rare and central place both in the prayer book and in Jewish teaching itself.

Jewish teaching is that God does hear our prayer, the prayer of the individual and the prayer of the congregation, and He does answer it because He is a personal God who knows and is interested in the individual and in human affairs. The Jew prays to "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." That is the formula in some of the most important passages in our liturgy. The question is sometimes asked, would it not be better to say "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob"? The answer is that the present wording makes it clear that He is a personal God and therefore the God of each of the patriarchs individually.

In our prayer book there is a much larger proportion of prayers of praise and thanksgiving than of prayers of petition. This is not merely due to the fact that we take a great part of the psalter and use it regularly in our services. Other parts of the prayer book recognise the greater religious potentiality in an act of thanksgiving than in petitionary prayer. It is a significant fact that the Greek word for "to pray" means "to wish," the German word means "to beg" and the Hebrew (*hitpallel*) means "to judge." When one prays one performs an act of self-examination. That leaves room for the scientific and psychological explanation of the power of prayer on the individual; but the central point of the Jewish approach to prayer is that God acts on the individual. The Jew believes that God acts and that, when the individual prays, he draws on the infinite grace of God for his personal assistance, so that strength comes to him from outside himself.

### ONE GOD—THE WAYS HE IS WORSHIPPED AND SERVED

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## Personal Prayer in Christianity

THE BISHOP OF WOOLWICH

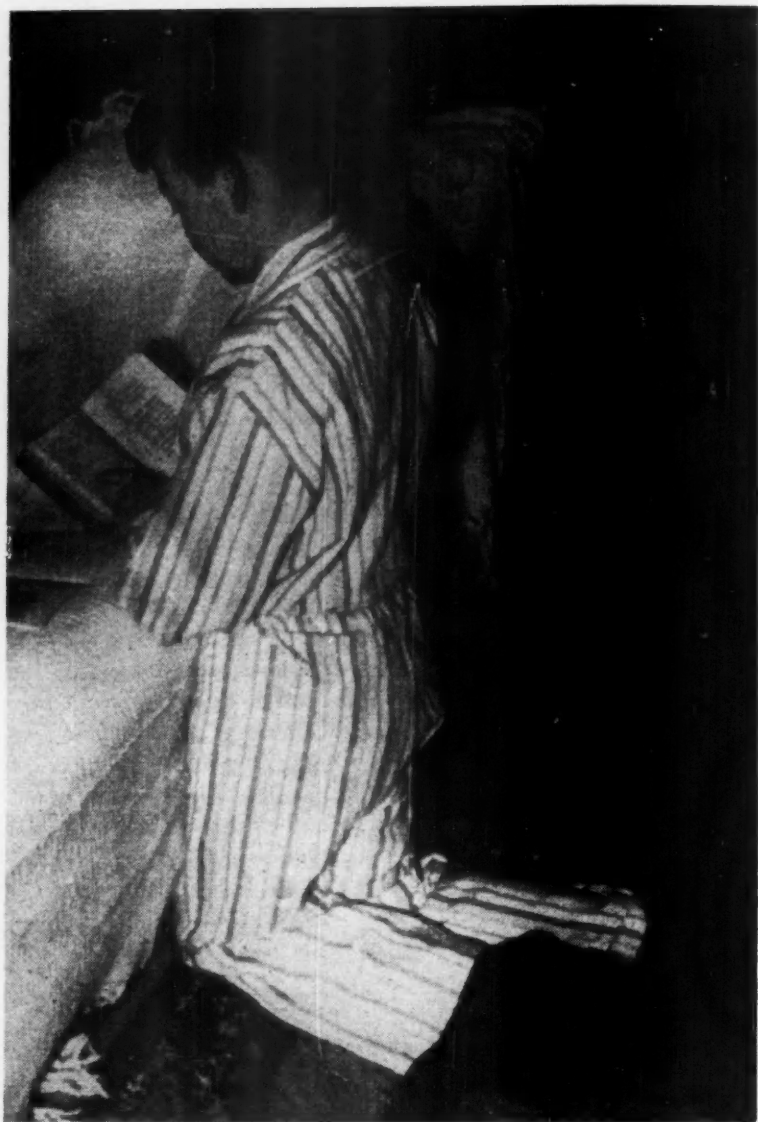
*The Christian address on Personal Prayer was given by the  
Bishop of Woolwich, the Rt. Rev. R. W. Stannard, M.A.*

**P**ERSONAL PRAYER, as a Christian understands it, is part of the Church's prayer; the whole Christian family makes its approach to God as a family. The individual's worship is part of the Church's worship, its offering and its sacrifice. Worship is a family act in which each member takes a personal part, not for personal ends but for the fulfilment of God's purpose for the world.

The Church, as a worshipping family, exists to lift up all the needs of all the world to God. If Christ is the mediator between God and man, the Church, which represents Him on earth, stands between God and man. Its purpose is not to separate man from God but to bridge the gap between them. It has to interpret each to the other. It offers up man's needs to God and brings God's grace to man.

Petition is the oldest form of prayer. Man has always felt himself in the presence of an unseen Power, so that he was in fact religious before he became conscious of having a religion. At first, he was concerned only to appease the unknown Power and to keep on the right side of it. This developed in two ways: into magic and into religion. In magic, spells and incantations were used in order to compel the unknown Power to give men what they wanted. In religion, the aim was to keep in a right relation with God, and prayer meant an appeal to God to grant a human request. Magic does not grow into religion. Its modern equivalent in scientific humanism is rather a secular use of human knowledge and the power to attain what is wanted for human ends. Religion developed into a sense of dependence upon God and prayer became the acceptance of God's will.

This does not rule out direct petition in prayer. Certainly we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." We may lay all our needs before our loving Father. "Your heavenly Father knoweth what ye have need of before ye ask;" and in that, He is very much like a human father. The small and homely things of life should be brought into prayer and sanctified by it. There is today too great a cleavage between the sacred and the secular; there should be nothing that is secular. The smallest detail may be included in our prayers, so long



#### EVENING PRAYERS

*From the Free Church filmstrip in the series "One God—the Ways He is Worshipped and Served."*

## PERSONAL PRAYER IN CHRISTIANITY

as it is for blessing, and our aim is not selfish. Petition is a right element in Christian prayer, so long as it is receptive rather than demanding.

Petitionary prayer is receptive. But does God always answer it? Most certainly, Yes. But not always in the way that we expect. Prayer will not be unanswered provided the desire that underlies it is in accordance with God's purpose. The question is often asked: Is God likely to upset the natural order in order to answer a human prayer? To that I would reply that the natural order is an enclave within the supernatural; and what we call natural laws are merely our own inductions from our limited observations.

Intercession is another element of Christian prayer. We are fellow-workers with God for the fulfilment of His purpose, and the answer to intercession is often guidance to help us carry out our tasks. Whereas petitionary prayer is receptive, intercessory prayer is co-operative.

Penitence expressed in prayer is, again, a corporate matter, but it can also be intensely personal. In any sort of Christian prayer there is a note of penitence; and indeed, there is emphatic need for it. Without penitence, we cannot be in a right relationship with God.

Prayers of praise, worship and thanksgiving are all both corporate and personal. In that, I think the Christian understanding is the same as the Jewish. Thanksgiving gives us a sense of dependence upon God; and Christian prayer is always one of dependence. We do in fact depend upon God for the most ordinary things in life.

Our attitude of body during prayer is somewhat different from the Jewish. The Christian custom is to stand for prayers of praise, for the Creed and for prayers for trust and the restoration of our faith. We kneel for humble confession and petition and for a good deal of other prayer. Occasionally there is an act of prostration, which has its own value in that we bow right down before God.

The times of prayer are usually morning and evening. The morning is the better time, because it is more important to think forward to what is coming than backward on what is past. The essential thing, however, is that the Christian is in touch with God all the time, and there is no time when he cannot send up his little arrow-points of prayer to God. The most important time for Christian prayer is *always*; and for the Christian there is no prayer without the continuous contact with God that he has through Christ.

## **An Annual Meeting that is different**

*A Review of the Annual General Meeting of the Council of  
Christians and Jews, held on 12th February, 1957.*

**T**HE MAJORITY of Annual General Meetings held at 3 p.m. on a winter's afternoon are not very conducive to enthusiasm. Each year those responsible for the organising of our own Annual Meeting have a certain amount of trepidation, although their experience ought to have given them confidence because our Annual Meeting is surely unique. It is of course truly business-like, and could not be otherwise with the Archbishop of Canterbury presiding. But it is also the most friendly family affair.

It is also an occasion for stretching the mind. Those who attend (the numbers run into hundreds) comprise a remarkable representation of the Bench, the University, the Church, the Synagogue, the Press, the Schools, Politics, Business, Art and Diplomacy. Everybody seems to know everybody else. Forenames are more in evidence than family names, though when moving resolutions everything is done with a delightful decorum completely lacking in pomposity. Indeed at the last meeting the Archbishop paid a special tribute to the high standard of the speeches that were made in the resolutions nominating the various officers. It is of course a tribute to the Council, and evidence of its valued place in the life of the nation, that so many distinguished persons should attend its Annual Meeting, as it is not without significance that year by year four of the leaders of the religious life of the nation should be elected as Presidents; that the Right Hon. Lord Cohen and Sir Richard Livingstone should be re-elected Vice-Presidents; and that in the new nominations to the Council we find some of England's leading Professors, Business Men, Bishops, Lawyers and Writers. Nor are these elections mere formalities. Each member shows an awareness that he takes the work of the Council with great seriousness, and is ever ready to play his part to the full.

In presiding over the Meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury shows his clear understanding of the vocation of the Council, and of the tremendous service put in by its Executive Officers, Canon Raven and William Simpson, the Chairman and General Secretary respectively, and by the Treasurers, Edmund de Rothschild, who is now joined by a new Co-Treasurer, Lord Chandos.

## THE REFUGEE: THE SYMBOL OF OUR TIME

When the business side of the Annual Meeting is concluded the opportunity is always taken of "stretching the mind" of the meeting by a discussion on one of the vital topics related to the Council's mission. This year it was the refugee problem, and the subject was opened up for us by Lord Gorell and Professor Norman Bentwich.

A resumé of their contribution is to be found elsewhere in *Common Ground*. It was left to the Chief Rabbi to move the Vote of Thanks, which proved to be one of the high-lights of the whole afternoon. Thus another unique afternoon in the life of the Council was completed.

### The Refugee : the Symbol of our Time

THERE WAS a certain inevitability about the selection of the refugee problem as the "mind stretching" exercise for this year's Annual General Meeting, for this almost timeless human tragedy had recently been thrown once more into sharp focus in the conscience of the world by contemporary events both in Hungary and the Middle East.

Lord Gorell, who spoke first, began by recalling how, in 1939, he had been invited by a previous Archbishop of Canterbury, Cosmo Lang, to succeed Sir Wyndham Deedes as Chairman of the Refugee Childrens' Movement; the prelude, as he put it, to "ten years of very responsible, very difficult, but at the same time extremely rewarding work," in which he had been joined by representatives of all sections of the Christian community, and of the Jewish faith.

The problem at the present time, said Lord Gorell, was one which called for "action by Governments because they are, after all, the makers of action; by the Churches which play or ought to play so large a part in the stimulation of thought; and by every individual throughout the civilized world." It was a problem which related to "the fundamentals of human happiness, of human freedom and of human thought." It was a problem which had been summed up by Sir John Hope Simpson who in the introduction to his "Survey of the Refugee Problem," published in 1939, wrote: "The cause of every refugee problem is tyranny of one kind or another, but the forms of tyranny differ. The latest form is due to the new doctrine of nationalism, which has resulted in the deification of the State, and

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the exclusion of all conflicting loyalties, whether political, social or religious."

Recalling the inscription on Sir David Livingstone's grave which invoked the blessing of heaven on everyone who would help to combat slavery and to heal "this open sore of the world," Lord Gorell went on to speak of the refugee problem as the present "open sore of the world" and of the refugee himself as seeking to escape from new forms of slavery, from the insistence of a man or of a group of people in dominating some other group or sect of people. The refugee had in fact become the symbol of the age in which we live.

### **Study of causes**

Turning to the question of possible remedies Lord Gorell said that "amelioration is not enough." There must be a searching study of the underlying causes of the problem, and following from that, the development of education in seeking "to change the outlook of those who are driving refugees hither and thither about the world." He also emphasised the importance of religion as "the mainspring of all that humanitarian work which will relieve even if it cannot cure these terrible ills."

Professor Norman Bentwich, who began by expressing his full agreement with Lord Gorell's analysis of "the essential core of this continuing problem," went on to review some of the work undertaken on behalf of refugees since 1933 by both voluntary, statutory and intergovernmental organisations. He referred in particular to "the solidarity and fraternity of the Jewish and Christian communities" in dealing with the particular problem of Jewish and so called "non-Aryan Christian" refugees from Nazi persecution and of the way in which the Council of Christians and Jews had come into being as a result of that co-operation.

Later in the course of his address Professor Bentwich said that "it is a bitter irony of the history of mankind that at a time when the world is so much more linked up, is so much more felt to be a physical unity than ever before, the sense of the unity of mankind is weaker than it ever was before." This he attributed partly to "the loss of faith in the Universal religions" and partly to "this fierce feeling of nationalism which causes such hardship and suffering to minorities of faith, race or religion." The irony, he said, is "so cruel because those who drive out masses of people and who try to impose

## THE REFUGEE: THE SYMBOL OF OUR TIME

their own beliefs on everybody in their State are moved by some conviction that they are progressing towards a better society and are driven by these means to do it."

Turning then to the things that were needed to counteract these tendencies, Professor Bentwich emphasised first "two qualities that we must try to instil, the first of which is the idea that people may be wrong in their thoughts and in their programmes. If only there were a little sense of fallibility in the masses of the people," he continued, "then we should be nearer the tolerance that allows people to live in peace even when they do not share the opinions or the nationality of the country in which they are living."

The second quality for which he pleaded was "the spirit of charity" and in this connection he made "one practical suggestion in relation to that refugee problem which seems to be the most poignant and acute of all those before us today, and particularly for Jews and Christians; the problem of the Arab refugees." His suggestion was that efforts be made to encourage "some Christian teachers, social workers and missionaries with a knowledge of the Middle East and of the language to go into the camp schools to help produce some sense of humanity and of charity. I think what is called for today," he added, "is the creation of a school of missionaries of humanity to counter the school of missionaries of hate."

### **Refugees lead spiritual advance**

He had one further point to make. "History," he said, "does show that refugees have made in the past, and even in our time are making, a distinct contribution to the spiritual well-being of mankind. For it was the Hebrew exiles in Babylon some two thousand five hundred years ago who made one of the great spiritual advances in Judaism."

"We have yet perhaps to find," concluded Professor Bentwich, "amongst those millions of refugees who are still in the world a great spiritual stirring, though there was one whose name has already been mentioned this afternoon, Dr. Leo Baeck, one of our Jewish community who did exercise, I believe, a great and lasting spiritual influence not only on his own community of German Jews but generally on the Jews of the world and also perhaps on the Christians. And as I should hope, it may that of those who have been through the furnace of trials and suffering some may bring

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not only to refugees but to the world as a whole the healing balm of fraternity and charity."

To the Chief Rabbi fell the privilege of thanking the speakers. "I feel," he said, "as I have listened to Lord Gorell and afterwards to Professor Bentwich, that the problem of the refugee as the symbol of our time is definitely a religious problem, and it is quite appropriate that in this Council we should appreciate the kind of spiritual climate in which we have our being. To say that the cause of the refugee problem is tyranny or passionate nationalism is, in my view, to say that tyranny and extreme nationalism are symptoms of a great defect in the make up of humanity and that defect is definitely a religious defect. What I feel we need to recover is a renewed emphasis on the stern fact that man has been created in the image of God . . . This is no mere privilege that man may be described in this sense. It is a heavy responsibility and burden which must regulate individual as well as group action."

### **Power and humility**

Then the Chief Rabbi treated us to a delightful and immediately relevant example of Rabbinic exegesis. Quoting from Monseignor Knox's translation of the Bible Dr. Brodie read from the tenth chapter of Deuteronomy: "The Lord your God is God of all Gods, Lord of all Lords; how great a God, how strong, how terrible. He will not flatter the great or take bribes from the rich; he gives redress to the orphan and widow, he is a friend of the wanderer and gives him food and clothing."

"These verses," said the Chief Rabbi, "have been used once by a great sage of days gone by to teach one of the great paradoxes of religion that where you find the great power and majesty of God described in the Scriptures, you will find immediately afterwards a passage describing his humility and compassion. We say, therefore, to all who have power and who use it in an arbitrary way: learn humility, learn compassion, learn humanity; and if you do so, then it is quite possible that you will learn to treat your neighbours of no matter what denomination or class with that love and that compassion, the perfect pattern of which has been set by our Father in Heaven."

The last word was with the Archbishop. "It is," he said, "our joy that as this meeting has gone on the emphasis has become louder and clearer that the only solution to the problem of the refugees

## LORD ATTLEE IN EAST LONDON

as of every other problem is a religious solution. Humanitarianism alone cannot carry the burden and we in this Council are fully aware of that." Then addressing himself primarily, though by no means exclusively to the politicians of the world, the Archbishop concluded: "Only when they begin praying properly will they see the way through, and to pray properly means praying for people of another religion, another race or another nation before rather than after praying for your own people."

### Lord Attlee in East London

*In our last issue we reported that Lord Attlee had accepted the Presidency of the Council of Citizens of East London. "Common Ground" is glad to be able to print this summary of his presidential address.*

"**H**ERE IN East London," said Lord Attlee, in his Presidential Address at the recent inaugural meeting of the newly-constituted Council of Citizens of East London at Toynbee Hall, "we are a remarkable community of very diverse origins. We are almost a kind of microcosm of the Commonwealth." The Council's job, he continued, "is to ensure that brotherly love should continue and that we should live together in harmony."

Lord Attlee then went on to recall some of his own impressions of the area when he first knew it fifty years ago. There was "a certain sense of friction." There had been a good deal of immigration in the 1890's and there was "a certain amount of antisemitism." Indeed, there was a local saying in those days that "the most miserable thing in the world was a Jew on the wrong side of Wapping Bridge on Good Friday."

Of antisemitism, the colour bar and indeed any other form of group prejudice, Lord Attlee said that "it always lends itself to the cheapest form of political exploitation." By the end of the first world war, however, such tendencies had more or less died down. In 1919, when Mr. Attlee, as he then was, was Mayor of Stepney, the Borough Council was one-third Irish, one-third Jewish and the rest, as he put it, "just ordinary blokes like me, and we got on very well."

In addition to the Irish, Jewish and Oriental minorities of earlier days there were now considerable numbers of West Indians and

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also some Sikhs in East London and there was a current need for active work both in school and at home to counteract prejudices, for it was "the easiest thing in the world to get up against people because they are not just of the same clay."

Speaking of his recent visit to India Lord Attlee referred to the number of castes and to the fact that white and coloured children mixed happily in the same schools without the slightest trouble. "Children," he said, "are extraordinarily free from prejudices which are generally fomented from outside by stupid, ignorant and prejudiced people."

### **Dangers of segregation**

Reverting to the situation in East London, the speaker mentioned two of the major difficulties likely to develop in a mixed community. "Danger arises," he said, "when you get a number of people who keep themselves to themselves. They are regarded as alien, and while they must necessarily have their own institutions, what they need is the kind of institution where everybody mixes."

A second difficulty arose from economic causes. Fifty years ago the influx of aliens into East London led to "the cry that all these people flooded in and put up the rents." Another claim was that "when they come in there is a lowering of wages." While there was adequate machinery today to prevent the skying of rents and any lowering of wages, "the great thing is to help people who come here to feel at home."

In particular, the speaker continued, "I have been rather disturbed by the way people come over, not necessarily permanently, but as students, and remain isolated, failing to meet any people except for the sort that don't do them any good. This is not a matter you can leave to your Government or Council or even teachers. It is a matter for the people themselves in ordinary families."

### **Mixing of peoples**

Lord Attlee was strengthened in this opinion by some of our war-time experiences. "There was an enormous breaking down of prejudice," he said, "in different parts of the country. People who had never seen a Cockney child were delighted when they did, as well they might be. There were also people who had not mixed much with people of other classes." He referred also to the way in which

American and Dominion troops were taken into people's houses, "and that," he added, "is the best way of breaking down prejudices."

Finally, Lord Attlee spoke of the excellent example of East London in the matter of group attitudes. "The East London Cockney," he said, "is the most tolerant person in the world, and the most kind. These are the things that have struck me: his kindness, his friendliness, and his tolerance. I forget how many elections I stood for in East London," he added, "about twelve I think, and we never had a cross word with our opponents."

Referring to the work of the Council of Citizens of East London, he expressed his confidence in its power to help maintain these traditions, but, he said, "while I think the teacher will play a leading part, I do not believe in leaving things just to one set of people and saying 'This is your job' and leaving it at that. We have got to get everyone to help . . . We are bound to have difficulties, but they can, I think, be overcome by good will, if we realise that the real basis of civilisation and democracy is a wise tolerance."

## Jesus in History

D. WALLACE BELL

*A review of "Jesus in the Background of History," by A. I. Polack and W. W. Simpson, recently published by Cohen and West, price 16s. 0d.*

JESUS OF NAZARETH is the dividing line in history, not merely because our calendar is dated from his birth, but through the impact which he has made on the whole tide of the affairs of men. He is, too, the dividing line between Christian and Jew, between those whose faith is the religion into which Jesus was born, in which he lived, and in which he died, and those whose faith is based on his own birth, life and death. Here is a division which time has not healed, but has led to endless controversy about the man himself. Who and what was he? Christian and Jewish assessments of Jesus are inevitably irreconcilable.

This book makes no attempt at an impossible reconciliation, but it does try to help towards a clearer understanding of our differences by seeing how far agreement can be reached about Jesus as an historical figure. It is written jointly by a Jew and a Christian, whose long association in the Council of Christians and Jews has

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led them both to understand to a remarkable degree one another's viewpoints, and to appreciate the inherent difficulty, indeed the impossibility, for either to reach a completely objective judgment on issues which in the nature of things do not lend themselves to merely scientific analysis. The first draft was written by Mr. Polack, the Jewish member of the partnership, for whom it was more natural to regard Jesus as a human figure stripped of "Christological claims." He then revised his text in the light of Mr. Simpson's comments, so that in its final form the book represents the maximum measure of agreement between the two. But where agreement was impossible—and there are many points—then Simpson's dissenting judgments are given in some very forthright footnotes. For all that the book remains on balance a Jewish assessment of Jesus which attempts at the same time to understand, from a Jewish viewpoint, how the Christian assessment differs from the Jewish, and it is as such that it has value.

It is, however, a book with which few readers will agree. Certainly Christian readers will find the portrayal of Jesus (despite Mr. Simpson's footnotes) totally inadequate; but could any assessment of Jesus which denied the Incarnation be otherwise? Does not the whole picture fall to pieces if the very warp of the canvas is removed? This reviewer is not qualified to judge the Jewish reaction, but from any viewpoint it would seem that if Jesus were not the Christ then he must have been a far more misguided and much smaller figure than Mr. Polack shows us, while the founders of the early Church must have had genius indeed to build a deluded, irresponsible and discredited fanatic (for if Jesus were not Christ what else was he than that?) into the figure of the saviour of the world.

### Neglected history

But to disagree with much in the book is not to minimise its importance or escape its challenge. Its title is *Jesus in the Background of History*, and although one may criticise the figure that stands in the foreground, the background itself is commendable. Drawing from Talmudic and Rabbinic as well as Biblical and historical sources, the authors give us a picture of the history of the Jewish people, and the development of varying and sometimes conflicting religious trends within Judaism itself, that were common knowledge in Jesus' own time but that all too often are forgotten or obscured

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in Christian teaching in our own day. They give us, too, a sympathetic portrayal of the kind of people among whom Jesus lived and worked, and of the strains and stresses in the contemporary society which provide the fabric for much of his teaching. We see the full pattern of the tradition to which he was heir, and the parts of that pattern that attracted him, and those which were abhorrent to him.

This is a background that so often we ignore, but that is essential to any real understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus as told in the Gospel narrative. It is when we come to the Gospel itself that the picture is weaker. We are shown, rightly, how much of Jesus' teaching has its source in the Old Testament and in early Rabbinic thought. We are shown how Jesus himself lived as a practising Jew of the highest tradition, but how his sympathy and concern for the unfortunate and the outcast led him to soften the application of orthodoxy. We are shown how his ministry and teaching brought him into conflict with one after another of the influential groups of his time, the Sadducaic priestly clique in league with the Roman occupation, some of the Pharisees with whose tradition he had so much in common, and eventually the Roman authority itself. But Polack's picture of the man himself (for here it is Polack who is speaking; Simpson's dissenting footnotes become more and more frequent in the later chapters) is unconvincing. He appears as one who, despite a unique gift for giving and inspiring love, is nevertheless over-filled with the sense of his own importance, guilty of self-righteousness and spiritual pride, vacillating in intention, at pains to escape from his enemies but deliberately walking into their clutches in Jerusalem, given to periods of utter dejection and despair. No, Mr. Polack! Not even on the purely historical plane could such a picture be justified.

Perhaps this weakness comes partly from a curious contradiction in method which the book reveals. For the most part, in dealing with Jesus' life and teaching, Mr. Polack relies solely upon the Gospel record for his source material. But in places he entirely discounts that record as being a later interpolation inserted either to justify a belief of the early Church which was not founded on Jesus' own teaching, or, after the separation of Church from Synagogue, to emphasise a conflict between Jesus and his own people. There appears, however, little reason why Mr. Polack should have

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selected some particular passages rather than others as being of doubtful validity.

To say that this book does not quite reach its aim of "assessing the permanent significance of Jesus' life and teaching apart from Christological claims" is in no way to condemn it. Perhaps the aim was impossible of attainment. It is a courageous book, and it will drive us back to our Bibles with a greater appreciation of both Old and New Testaments, and, whether we be Jews or Christians, with a greater sympathy and understanding for those who cannot share our own view of the central figure of the Gospel story. Could we ask more of the book than that?

### Common Ground Causerie

CANON A. W. EATON

I WELCOME the opportunity given me by the Editorial Board to edit a NEW FEATURE for *Common Ground*, which will enable me to share with you those matters of common concern to all who have the Council's work at heart. My plan is to share some of the interesting pieces of information relevant to our work that have come my way, and hope that by them I may inform some, encourage others, and indicate where men have discovered a common ground for action: all this to the better understanding of all concerned and the promotion of goodwill. I would like to hope that *Common Ground Causerie* becomes also your own causerie, and that you will by sending me interesting comments enable me to pass them on to all our readers.

\* \* \* \*

It is with mixed feelings that I open up my Causerie with reference to BISHOP JOOSTE DE BLANK, a Council member, and also an exceedingly zealous member of our Executive. His appointment as Archbishop of Capetown has been received with very mixed feelings. The Council, and indeed England, will lose a devoted, lively and wise counsellor; and for that we can only have the deepest regret. South Africa however has won for its future leadership one young enough to serve it a long time, and one who by virtue of his wide experience, wise judgment and deep sense of justice will serve that land with great distinction. We know from his intimate contact with the multi-racial and religious scene of the East End of London

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that he is fully aware of the importance of trying to understand the other man's point of view; we know also of his ability to do so. He goes to South Africa with all goodwill of our Council, and with a recognition that he has made a truly magnificent contribution to our working together.

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The death of GEOFFREY HARE CLAYTON, Archbishop of Capetown whom Bishop de Blank succeeds, removes from the South African scene one who was described by General Smuts as "a truly great South African, and one of the most intelligent ever to have served this Land." Bishop Clayton was for many years President of the South African Society of Jews and Christians, and a regular contributor to its monthly journal *Common Sense*. He knew no colour bar, as he knew no religious bar. Chief Rabbi Abrahams of Cape-town says of him: "He was a great man, a prince of the Church, a spiritual Statesman, by nature a lover of democracy, which he interpreted in the widest liberal sense." His sympathies were invariably with the poor and weak, hence he emerged in the maelstrom of the contemporary South African scene as a defender of individual rights, irrespective of race or creed. "Truly a prince and a great man hath fallen" in the service of God and of his fellows. It is a privilege indeed that we should have been so associated with him in our work in the Council.

\* \* \* \*

The report that an attempt was being made to establish the KU KLUX KLAN in England was at once treated with all the seriousness that it deserved, and rightly called forth Parliamentary observation and police investigation. It would appear that there is no serious attempt being made to introduce this evil in our midst and we welcome the focus of public attention upon the report, and the television filming of the organisation's American activity, which must prove as repugnant to us here as it is to all thoughtful Americans. From the point of view of our Council this focus of attention reminds us of the necessity for continual vigilance for those who in their zeal for casting out one evil spirit, make room for the entry of seven more worse than the first. Let us hope we have heard the end of such an organisation in our way of life. I was glad that "the powers that be" did not adopt the line: "Oh, here are only a few cranks!"

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The fact that two thousand young Germans walked in the rain across the sodden waste that once was Belsen Concentration Camp deserved the widest publicity. It was a very significant act. Under the auspices of the Hamburg Society for Christian and Jewish Co-operation these young Germans made pilgrimage to the grave of ANNE FRANK and scattered flowers on the graves of the 30,000 murdered Jews who lie buried there. This they did as an act of atonement for the victims of Nazism. Those present then took a pledge that never again in their country shall such hatred be allowed to exist. The impetus for this act of atonement came from the showing of the play *Diary of Anne Frank*, the 17 year-old German Jewish schoolgirl who was murdered by the Germans. This play, which had a successful run in London, is said to have done more to arouse the conscience of Germany than anything else. Incidentally the play, which is also having a most phenomenal run in America, is said to be one of the greatest plays of our day. If it comes your way you ought to try and see it.

\* \* \* \*

From WASHINGTON I learned of an interesting piece of news, in that at the National Cathedral at Washington a stained glass window has just been dedicated to three distinguished American Labour leaders, William Green, President of the American Federation of Labour, Philip Murray, President of the Congress Industrial Organisation, and Samuel Gompers, father of Organised Labour Movements. They were Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jew respectively.

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From the four Presidents of our Council there has gone forth an appeal which they have jointly commended, for greater financial SUPPORT OF OUR COUNCIL. It is one of the most important appeals that has yet been made on behalf of the Council. It will therefore not be surprising to our readers that the Executive Committee considered it had a bounden duty, before the appeal was issued, to look at the whole policy and future work of the Council in order to be sure that the Presidents' appeal on its behalf was fully justified.

It is significant that after having received that report the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi, both of whom by virtue of their more permanent office are able to keep in the closest contact with the Council, were able to say: "The Council does its invaluable

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work in keeping relations wholesome and fruitful between Christians and Jews. Its influence stretches beyond that and encourages understanding and toleration wherever it is threatened;" and "The Council has amply demonstrated its value in combating intolerance and in removing misunderstanding and promoting good relations . . . the Council's work is more needful than ever."

It is hoped that the appeal will be well supported.

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On May 18th the Thirty-Sixth Welsh Children's Peace Message was broadcast to the Children of the World, first in Welsh and then in nine other languages.

The text of the Message was as follows:—

"This is GOODWILL DAY. Once again we, the boys and girls of Wales, send to you, the youth of the world, our warmest greetings. And those of you who are ill or lonely or unhappy have a special place in our thoughts.

"Across every frontier and above all differences comes our Message of Goodwill.

"We are growing up in a troubled world. Amid so much suffering and strife, we often wonder what the future holds for us. Nevertheless we firmly believe that as we, the youth of the nations dedicate ourselves to the cause of righteousness and peace, the forces of evil will be overcome. Let us therefore pray that we may be strengthened to help out leaders in every land to give us a world free from fear, war and want. Our friendship will help to create that world.

"With confidence and hope, let us go forward together to meet the future."

In reflecting on this splendid piece of work being done by the Children of Wales, my mind recalls our first receiving of a similar message in South Africa, somewhere around 1936. It seemed to a good many of us who were then members of the South Africa Society of Jews and Christians that here was something we might pass on to the children of South Africa, and a South African Goodwill Council was established consisting of both Afrikaans and English, Black and White, Jews, Roman Catholics and Protestants. The two groups, the South African and the Welsh, still exchange messages every year on Goodwill Day. Only a few weeks ago I received the South Africa Goodwill Day Magazine which is edited by children of all races, and it is one of the more constructive things

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that comes from that land. I also notice that some of the best essays were by young Afrikaans. I pin my hope on the young South Africans who are learning goodwill and understanding in this way.

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Anxiety about the status of JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION is causing grave concern throughout World Jewry. At the recent World Jewish Congress, Dr. Perlzweig called attention to the fact that up to 1948 the Soviet Union proclaimed fundamental equality for all racial groups, and complete and untrammelled freedom; but in that year all was swept away almost overnight so that today, though the Jewish population was estimated at three millions, there was not a single Jewish School or cultural Institution and only one Jewish publication. An appeal is now being made to the United Nations to call upon the Soviet Union to implement its own profession of racial and religious equality. It is not without significance that at the same Congress it was reported that the persecution of Jews by the Nasser regime was as brutal as that of the Nazis, and that this is being ignored by the United Nations. As one reads a report of this nature one is reminded of the need for the continual focussing of attention on the evil of intolerance and persecution wherever it may be, and of how important it is to strengthen the hands of all who are intimately concerned with each particular manifestation of it. To that end it is salutary to remind Council supporters that whilst our main responsibility for action lies in our own country, the Council has always believed it right to keep itself informed of all relevant problems in Europe and in the Middle East.

## About Ourselves

THE MANCHESTER COUNCIL of Christians and Jews held two further conferences for school children on April 3rd and 4th. On each day nearly two hundred children attended the conferences, drawn from many different schools. On April 3rd, with an age range of 16½ to 18, the theme of the conference was "Prejudice" and the day opened with two stimulating talks on the roots of intolerance. There were

then group discussions, and the feature film "Prejudice" was shown. Later there were further discussions followed by a "Sociodrama" scene based on the colour bar in which some of the pupils took part.

On the second day the age range was 15 to 16½ and the theme was "Neighbourliness." Again there were talks and discussions, films and, in this case, a Brains Trust.

## ABOUT OURSELVES

This is the third year that Manchester has run these schools conferences which have proved to be highly successful and popular with both children and teachers.

THE LONDON SOCIETY of Jews and Christians, which throughout the winter has held a series of monthly lectures in London, completed its programme on May 16th with a visit to St. Paul's Cathedral and Bevis Marks Synagogue. For members of the Society this was something more than a "conducted tour" and it was particularly interesting to be able to see on the same evening these two historic centres, Christian and Jewish, which both date from the same period.

THE HAMPSTEAD BRANCH of the Council held its Annual Meeting on May 29th, and this year Hampstead reverted to the earlier practice by combining the business meeting with a film show. Three short films were shown, and as usual in Hampstead people welcomed the opportunity of meeting old friends and talking informally over a cup of tea.

ON JULY 11th a Schools Conference is to be held in County Hall, London, under the auspices of the Council of Citizens of East London. As in earlier years children will come to this from a wide range of grammar schools, and the discussions will be on the theme "You and Your Neighbour." These schools conferences provide an excellent opportunity for some serious discussions on questions of group relations, and the mixture of pupils from different schools is in itself a practical demonstration of the questions under discussion.

READERS OF COMMON GROUND may recall that some years ago Miss Harriet Cohen gave a series of piano-forte recitals on behalf of the Council of Christians and Jews in churches and cathedrals in Chester, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. More recently the Hampstead Parish Church Choir and the Jewish Male Voice Choir combined in an evening's programme of music from church and synagogue in a function arranged by the Hamp-

stead Branch of the Council. The success of these ventures encouraged us to arrange a series of recitals in central London, where members of the Council and their friends would be able to meet and enjoy together our common heritage of music.

As we go to press the first of these recitals has already taken place, when Miss Harriet Cohen, C.B.E., delighted her audience with a programme ranging from Bach to the modern Brazilian composer, Villa Lobos. On July 12th there will be another piano-forte recital, this time by Celia Arieli; and on July 3rd the recital will be by the B.B.C. Singers under their conductor Leslie Woodgate. These recitals, which are given in the beautifully restored church of St. James in Piccadilly, are under the patronage of Sir Arthur Bliss, the Master of the Queen's Musick. We hope that any who read this note and have not heard about the recitals will take this as an invitation to attend them.

UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP of Mr. James-Crook, to whose cheerful and inspiring leadership we owe so much in so many ways, our Willesden Local Council held its Annual General Meeting on April 11th. The interest and support of the Civic authorities of the Borough was evidenced by the presence on the platform of Her Worship the Mayor of Willesden, and the religious bodies by certain of the denominational leaders. The formal business reflected a successful year's work with a satisfactory financial situation at the end.

All this, however, was merely the prelude to two of the most delightful and deeply moving addresses that can ever have been delivered on any C.C.J. platform. The speakers were the Rev. Dr. W. A. L. Elmslie and Mr. Victor Mishcon. Their subject had been announced as "Co-existence," a term which in these days has come to have a rather forbidding political connotation. What they spoke about was quite simply "Living Together," particularly in terms of the problems and opportunities confronting members of different groups in local situations. Each took the meeting entirely into his confidence and spoke

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in the most intimate and delightful way of childhood experiences: Dr. Elmslie as a "son of the Manse" who had spent several of his boyhood years in Willesden, and Mr. Mishcon, a son of a Rabbi who had spent his early years on the other side of the river in Brixton.

Willesden will, we hope, have many more Annual General Meetings. It will never have a better one than this, save in one possible respect—the size of the audience. But then, as Mr. Mishcon said at the outset of his address, in these days the size of any audience is usually in inverse proportion to the importance of the cause it is invited to support!

WITH A VISIT from the General Secretary on Tuesday, May 14th, the Cardiff Council wound up what has been one of its most successful series of winter meetings for many years. Eighteen months ago it became clear

that the Local Council could no longer afford the services of a part-time paid secretary, and it was therefore decided to accept the suggestion of Mr. L. Nidditch that two members of his administrative staff, Mr. Edwards and Mr. Freedman, a Christian and a Jew, should take over as joint honorary secretaries. Nothing could have worked out more happily. These two young men, each an active member of his own religious community, have worked splendidly together with growing appreciation of the value and importance of the Council's purposes. Encouraged by Mr. Nidditch, to whose generosity as Treasurer the Cardiff Council is greatly indebted, and inspired by the leadership of Mr. D. R. Prosser, the President, and the Rev. A. H. Nicholas, the Chairman of the local Branch, they succeeded in matching important speakers with growing audiences. We look for still greater things from our Cardiff friends in the years to come.

## Book Notes

### **An Old Faith in the New World**

Portrait of Shearith Israel, 1654-1954

*By David and Tamar de Sola Pool*  
(Columbia University Press)

"Early in September, 1654, a small group of Jews, twenty-three in all, providentially reached the port of Nieuw Amsterdam. They were the Founding Fathers of Congregation Shearith Israel in the city of New York and of the Jewish Community in the United States of America, a community destined to become within three centuries the largest Jewish settlement in all the long history of the Children of Israel." These are the opening words of a detailed and ably written account of the establishment of a small group of Jewish exiles and of their continuous development into the influential congregation Shearith Israel, now two hundred thousand

times their number. Until 1825 this was the only synagogue in New York City and the centre of Jewish life, culture and beneficent social activities.

Though Shearith Israel maintained unbroken the fundamental tradition of the Western European Sephardim in its liturgy, ritual and music, it exercised a powerful influence over everyone coming to the city who wished to remain a Jew, whatever his background, Sephardi or Ashkenazi, and gave generous help to the successive waves of immigrants who sought refuge in the New World from persecution and tyranny in the Old.

The relations between Shearith Israel and the various Christian Communion in New York were always of a friendly and even cordial nature: "At all times Synagogue and Church have helped one another and have joined to further causes of human justice and brotherly love . . . a story characteristic of a land which in the

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words of George Washington 'To bigotry gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance—but generously affords to all liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship'. In this connection it is interesting to note that members of Shearith Israel joined the study group on inter-faith relations in the U.S.A. from which originated the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The book contains many excellent illustrations, including portraits of some of the outstanding personalities in Shearith Israel who had the "vision and courage, the dignity and firmness to establish their just rights in a new land."

### The Abyss of Truth

By Nathaniel Micklem

(Geoffrey Bles., 8s. 6d.)

When Dr. Micklem speaks of the "abyss" of truth, he does not mean the abyss of scepticism, or of relativity, or of meaninglessness into which truth as a concept has been plunged by various schools of philosophical thought from the Sophists down to the Logical Positivists of our own time. Truth, he explains in his opening chapter, is the relation between a knowing and searching mind and the thing as it is in itself; it is relative to the mind and therefore open to the defects, perversions and limitations of man. But as man's awareness deepens through all the various experiences of life, through intellectual reasoning, through love and friendship for his fellowmen and through faith into an ultimate Being, so glimpses into the abyss of truth reveal to him something of the super-sensible world. It is this revelation, its meaning, its content and its religious truths, which Dr. Micklem discusses in the principal chapters of his book. Though he ends by showing what is distinctive in Christian revelation, he never equates revelation as such with any particular faith or doctrine. His study is in fact stimulating a epistemology applied to religious knowledge and religious truths in the widest sense.

### Eldorado Jane

By Phyllis Bottome

(Faber and Faber, 15s.)

In her latest novel, Phyllis Bottome again reveals her deep understanding of human psychology, her insight into current social problems, and her ability to tell a story in an unforgettable way. "Eldorado Jane" lived in America until she was twelve, when she was "kidnapped" by George Marsden—a British cat burglar of great skill, who brought her to London, where under his guidance she becomes an expert thief. She is however caught on her first large-scale burglary and sent first to a Remand Home and later to an Approved School. Her reactions to these institutions and her changing attitude to the criminal world which is her home, and to George, form the major theme of the book.

Miss Bottome's character sketches are brilliant, particularly those of staff and girls in the Institutions to which Jane is sent. Many of the girls are movingly portrayed as victims of circumstance, as outcasts, and in some cases as the confirmed enemies of society. Those who try to help them do so from an interesting variety of mixed motives. Miss Bottome is well aware both of the possibilities for good and of the many existing limitations of these institutions. She is concerned with the whole problem of juvenile delinquency, as well as with the wider issues of the criminal law and the ethics of capital punishment. Some of Jane's musings on the latter subjects show perhaps more of Miss Bottome's insight and maturity of thought than one might have expected from Jane herself.

There is always a danger in a novel in which social background is of considerable importance, that the people in the story may appear as "types" and become rather shadowy and unreal in consequence. The danger however, holds no terrors for Miss Bottome whose characters, and in particular Jane herself, are vital, living and individual. They are, in fact, a challenging and stimulating reminder that the typical or average

person does not really exist, and that what we have to deal with is the individual in his or her particular social background and with the extent to which he or she is affected by it.

### Laws and Flaws

By Edward F. Iwi

(Odham's, 21s.)

Mr. Edward Iwi is a man with an unusual hobby and a pretty wit. By profession a lawyer he has made so careful a study of constitutional problems as to have discovered a number of flaws in our laws. Thus, for example, the discovery of a nice point as to whether the Heir presumptive to the British throne came of age at 18 or 21 prompted Mr. Iwi to write a letter to *Times* raising the issue on June 23, 1943. The letter provoked no reply, but some time later its author was informed by the Home Secretary that a "Message from His Majesty the King signed by His Majesty's own hand" asking Parliament to amend the Regency Act of 1937 owed its origin directly to Mr. Iwi's letter.

Of a very different order, though perhaps of more immediate benefit to many of the subjects of His Majesty, King George VI, was a letter written by this man with microscopic eyes to the President of the Board of Trade in 1941 pointing out a certain injustice in the fact that burial shrouds were not included in the list of articles which in the early days of clothes rationing were obtainable free of coupons. Again Mr. Iwi's letter "did the trick" and although, happily neither his family nor his executor had occasion to benefit by this act of foresight, it required only a fortnight for the President to make up his mind that death shrouds should be coupon-free.

These two so disparate examples have one thing at least in common. Apart altogether from their intrinsic interest—which, incidentally, they share with so much else in this most entertainingly learned book—they make clear beyond all question that Mr. Iwi's "hobby" is no mere academic pursuit and that an individual who makes a well-founded point can still get things done!

But the book is more than a commentary on the general proposition that the price of liberty is still eternal vigilance. It focusses much needed attention on the particular thesis that in the words of its author, "the rights and liberties of the subject" (which as a result of two world wars are less today than they were in 1914) "will never be restored until Parliament reasserts its supremacy over the Executive and ordains that the Judiciary and not the Executive shall redress the grievances created by the Executive."

Here then is a rare book in which the general reader will find not a dull page nor the specialist an unimportant one. It has moreover the very great virtue of proving to both the specialised and the general reader that its fundamental thesis really does work when put to the test of practice by someone who, like its author, takes the elementary but too often neglected precaution of making quite sure that he knows what he is talking about.

### Introduction into the Old Testament

(*Einleitung in das Alte Testament unter Einschluss der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen sowie der apokryphen und pseudepigraphenartigen Qumrân-Schriften; Entstehungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*; second revised edition; Tübingen 1956; XVI & 954 pp.; price DM 54,-).

By Otto Eissfeldt

A book that escapes comparison with any other book on the same subject is Professor Eissfeldt's *Introduction into the Old Testament*, recently published in its second, revised, edition. In its sovereign knowledge of the subject matter in all its widespread ramifications, in its soundness of critical judgment, in the warmth of its presentation, and in the clarity of its style, this book outranks all books—in any language—that have been written on the Old Testament.

This book is the result of a life study by a man who is to-day the foremost scholar in the field of Old Testament studies. In composing it,

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Professor Eissfeldt consulted the publications by other scholars, written in modern Hebrew, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, modern Greek and Latin. Even the most recent literature up to 1956, has been fully considered and, at times, utilized.

Proceeding from an analysis of pre-literary units, both in prose and poetry, Eissfeldt traces the development of ancient Hebrew letters to the formation of books such as are embodied in the Old Testament or are known to have existed besides the Hebrew Canon. English readers who are in general not conversant with the methods of "form-critical" study will find the first part of the book, on the shortest *units* of Hebrew self-expression—be it ordinance, narrative or song—most illuminating reading and most instructive. This part extends from p. 9 to p. 149. The second part of the book, pp. 150 to 181, deals with the development from pre-literary to literary expression. The third and most substantial part contains an analysis of the various books of the Hebrew Bible. The fourth part deals with the history of the Hebrew Canon as a whole, pp. 692 to 707, and with such writings as have not been included into the Hebrew Bible whether they are extant in Hebrew, Aramaic, or only in Greek, Syriac, Aethiopian, Latin, Old Slavonic or other translation languages. A special section of this division is devoted to the recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 788 to 822. A fifth part, on pp. 823 to 875, deals with the history of the Masoretic Text and that of the Versions, Samaritan Pentateuch, Targumim, Pshitta, Septuagint, Hexapla, Old Latin and Vulgate, and clarifies problems of textual criticism as to how the Versions may assist the task of restoring the original wording if and when the received Hebrew text appears not to have preserved that wording. A survey of the literature which the author has consulted and various indexes conclude the stately volume of Professor Eissfeldt's work.

No greater compliment could have been paid to British scholarship than Professor Eissfeldt has rendered by dedicating this book to "the rep-

resentatives of three generations of British Old Testament scholarship," Professor Theodore H. Robinson, Professor Harold H. Rowley and Professor Aubrey R. Johnson.

### The Old Testament Speaks to You

*Das Alte Testament als Anrede*

By Walther Zimmerli

(Verlag Christian Schneider, Munich)

Professor Walther Zimmerli of Goettingen University has collected in this volume five popularly written essays with a common purpose of setting forth what is the appeal and what the meaning of the Old Testament for Christian people in the present age. The call, addressed in the Old Testament to the Jewish nation "to be witnesses of God's truth and God's justice" on this earth, remains as powerful and valid as ever, even though to-day it is directed to men from many nations. It is especially the prophet Ezekiel to whom Zimmerli devotes his exposition. Speaking as a scholar and as a man aware of the perplexities of existence in the twentieth century in which he lives, Zimmerli somehow continues in the great homiletic tradition of early patristic authors. The book is instructive without being difficult to read.

### A Design for Democracy

(Parrish, 15s. 0d.)

The 1919 report on Adult Education has here been reprinted in a slightly abridged form for the general reader. It is introduced by a foreword entitled "The Years Between" in the course of which Professor Waller of Manchester University explains the reasons for the re-publication of the report and looks back on the developments in adult education that have taken place between 1919 and the present day. In addition the original letter sent by the Chairman of the Committee responsible for the report (Mr. A. L. Smith, then Master of Balliol) to the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd-George, has been reproduced as showing in a concise form what are the essential and abiding needs for adult education.

The interesting thing about this report is how little it has dated in spite of all that has happened in the thirty-seven years since it was written. Adult education is still the Cinderella of our educational programme. It is true that the Universities, with their extra-mural departments, give greater facilities for it than in the past, that independent voluntary organisations have increased in numbers and now work more generally in the cultural sphere (16 in Wolverhampton in 1919—now about 80) and that Women's Institutes, about which the report is a little condescending, now number 8,261 and show how important has been the emergence of women in the adult educational field. Yet one cannot detect any major transformation in the scene. The effect of wireless and television is ambivalent and has still to be assessed. There is a slowly growing demand for further education but it has not permeated the masses—the proportion of manual workers attending Technical Classes has, in fact, steadily fallen. The creation of County Colleges on which the report sets its main hope seems to be as far away as ever.

In such a situation the re-publication of the 1919 report, with its classic statement of the aims of Adult Education and the methods by which they may be achieved, will be welcomed by all who realise how pressing is the need "to lay the foundations of more intelligent citizenship and of a better social order." Every aspect of the problem is here discussed in a hopefully constructive spirit—the function of the state, the supply of teachers, the psychological approach to adult students, rural education, technical and human factors in education and so forth. And throughout there is the happy recognition of the fact that "in perhaps the majority of cases the dynamic of adult education comes from its social motive."

### **The Boy and his Needs**

*By Eric Meissner  
(Macdonald 18s. 0d.)*

Though the title of this book is misleading, for it gives little in the way of practical help with regard to the training of boys, it should nevertheless be read by all who are interested in the

wider aims of education. For it offers a bold challenge to many of our modern assumptions and states in finely idealistic terms a broad philosophy of life upon which the sacred task of guiding the young should be based.

In his elaboration of this the author is at pains to correct the commonly held view that "the flat denial of all religious propositions is a sign of intelligence and critical acumen." He maintains, on the contrary, that "the well-considered religious assent is of a higher intellectual order than the denial." What our generation needs more than anything else is "religious prudence"—a complex virtue in which the critical faculties, humility, emotional honesty and moral courage all have a part to play. The youth trained in religious prudence will be able to distinguish between what is dead and what is alive. But it is a virtue that cannot be taken for granted, it has to be cultivated.

And here the author pays a unique tribute to Israel and the Jewish contribution. Like his predecessor at Gordonstoun, Kurt Hahn, he experienced at first hand the impact of the Nazi terror and realised, in something like a cosmic sense, the implications of the Jewish persecution. This has led him to assess the values of Judaism in the most generous terms. Knowledge of Israel he regards as indispensable to the good education. Through it "criteria are gained." It is the religion of "deep-rooted joy, tender and spiritual."

Of particular interest in this context are the comparisons made between Judaism and Christianity. Here the author has some startling, sometimes highly controversial, things to say. The view, for instance, that the Roman Church is closer to Judasim than the Protestant Churches will be disputed by many. But the great value of this part of the book is his plea for a fresh dialogue between Rabbis and Christian theologians on the Messianic theme. This, he thinks, would arouse greater interest than the barren controversies between the Christian churches. For it would throw fresh light on the great mystery of the Kingdom of God which both Jews and Christians regard as "incorporating and transfiguring this earthly life."